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ABSTRACT

The three essays in this discussion paper present ways of structuring the concept of non-formal education. "Toward a Contextual Definition of Non-Formal Education" isolates three primary sub-systems: organizational, human, and curricular. Within these subsets non-formal education is differentiated from formal education by a more loosely integrated structure capable of accommodating the three subsets. "Non-Formal Education: Problems and Promises" looks at institutions anthropologically and defines non-formal education as a planned instructional design using both overt and convert procedures in a more flexible environment to teach goals determined by regulated policy. Using this definition the essay discusses non-formal education's implications for development aid, its potential for achieving developmental goals, and its inherent problems. "An Operational Approach to the Definition of Non-Formal Education" reviews the following contextual elements: changing development goals, limited resources, underdeveloped populations, government and accounting agencies, formal schooling, accepted reward structures, and communications media. A pragmatic definition reflecting the needs posed by these elements is that non-formal efforts are outside the formalized, hierarchical structure of the graded school system, yet, are deliberately planned. Their "non-formality" resides in their locational and organizational aspects rather than their purposes, pedogogy, or status. (JH)

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NON-FORMAL EDUCATION: THE DEFINITIONAL PROBLEM

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NUMBER TWO

NON-FORMAL EDUCATION: THE DEFINITIONAL PROBLEM

Toward a Contextual Definition of Non-Formal Education

Russell J. Kleis, Charles L. Lang, John R. Mietus and Fia T. S. Tiapula

Non-Formal Education: Problems and Promises

Ted Ward and John Dettoni

An Operational Approach to the Definition of Non-Formal Education

Interim Report of the Michigan State University Program of Studies in Non-Formal Education

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ABOUT THIS SERIES . . .

Through this series of reports we invite readers interested in non-formal education to react to our work and to contribute toward building a new and exciting field of inquiry and practice. These preliminary reports aim at making as explicit as possible some of the crucial issues in the theory and practice of non-formal education. While they represent considerably more than exploratory thinking, we do not think of these statements in any sense as final. Development would be a better word to characterize a field still so open to definition and so diffuse in conception and practice.

A word about the Program of Studies in Non-Formal Education at Michigan State University may be in order. The Program, under the sponsorship of the Agency for International Development has the basic purpose of building a systematic knowledge base about non-formal education in response to the growing need for authoritative information about this mode of education in the developing countries. There are nine areas of study: (1) historical perspectives, (2) categories and strategies, (3) country comparisons, (4) learning effectiveness, (5) economic factors, (6) case study survey, (7) model feasibility, (8) administrative alternatives, and (9) participant training.

Teams of faculty members and research fellows in a number of academic disciplines are working on the nine subject areas and the papers in this series represent portions of their production.

We invite responses to these papers as an important means of helping us critically to examine our work in a new field only now being given real form and substance.

Cole S. Brembeck, Director
Institute for International Studies
College of Education
Michigan State University
East Lansing, Michigan
June 14, 1973

NON-FORMAL EDUCATION:
THE DEFINITIONAL PROBLEM

INTRODUCTION

A recurrent problem in the study of non-formal education is that of the domain of the concept. There is no easy answer to that problem, nor is the fact that the concept remains ambiguous particularly troublesome. Indeed, to articulate a definition and adhere to it narrowly would probably be a serious mistake, since the potential field of non-formal education is so various and systematic investigation of it so new. Unlike formal education, non-formal education has no single institutional base on which a definition can be constructed. The character of an activity is always understood partly in relationship to its institutional context. "Education," when it is construed as a schooling function, can always be "defined" as what is done in school. But non-formal education has many contexts and the context cannot be assumed as it can in the case of formal education. Definitional statements, as a consequence, tend to involve considerations and dimensions that do not get treated when "formal education" is defined within the schooling context. Definitional treatments of the concept of non-formal education, then, are usually either brief and operational or complex. The three

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essays presented here fall into the latter category, as they all present ways of laying out a fairly comprehensive structuring of the domain of the concept. Although there are a number of similarities among the treatments, there are also differences, especially in terms of programmatic perspective. Taken together, they provide a fairly complete exposition of the questions involved in defining non-formal education and, perhaps, a few tentative resolutions of those questions.

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TOWARD A CONTEXTUAL DEFINITION OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

By

Russell J. Kleis
Charles L. Lang
John R. Mietus
and
Fia T. S. Tiapula

Education is to human resources as development is to natural resources. Each is a complex process through which native potential is realized.

Generally defined, education is the sum of all the experiences through which a person or a people come to know what they know. Experience is encounter, direct or mediated, between a person and his environment. Encounter educes change (learning) in the person; and it produces change (development) in the environment. Learning yields knowledge in the form of cognition (perceived, interpreted and retained information), competence (intellective and/or motive skill) and volition (value, attitude, appreciation or feeling based preferences for acting or reacting). What comes to be known may be intended or unintended and it may be true or untrue; it is simply what is taken (believed) to be true.

In one enormously pervasive sector of education the day-to-day direct and unexamined experiences of living constitute the bases of beliefs, habits,

values, attitudes, speech patterns and other characteristics of a person or a people. Such experiences are educationally unintentional; but they are none the less powerful. The results are so common and they are produced so completely without awareness or intent that they are commonly thought to be "natural" or "inherent." The fact is, of course, that they are learned. They constitute *incidental education*.

The same or similar experiences may be consciously examined and deliberately augmented by conversation, explanation, interpretation, instruction, discipline and example from elders, employers, peers and others, all within the context of day-to-day individual and community living. Such examination and augmentation may be intended as educative, but the experiences themselves usually are not consciously contrived to be so. Such augmented real life experiences constitute *informal education*.

What is more commonly called education is much more intentional and systematic. It involves deliberate selection and systematic structuring of experiences, direct or mediated, and the establishment of explicit missions, roles, and patterns of operation. Sooner or later it is likely to become the socially assigned function of a school or a system of schools.

Such an intentionally devised educational system has three primary sub-systems, each having two major components:

1. Organizational

   A. Mission — The legally and/or consensually established framework of intention within which particular purposes, goals and objectives are evolved and pursued.

   B. Sponsor — The political, religious, industrial and/or other institutional complex which initiates, supports and governs the enterprise and within which operating institutions (often schools) are established, legitimized and managed.

2. Human

   A. Mentors — The personnel, whether specially trained and certified or not, who teach, counsel, administer and otherwise staff the enterprise.

   B. Students — The participants whose cognition, competence and/or volition are to be educed.

3. Curricular

   A. Content — The body of knowledge (information, competence and/or preference patterns) which students are expected to learn.

   B. Media — The materials, equipment, plant and processes by means of which direct or vicarious experiences are provided for participants.

To the extent that an education system is closely integrated structurally and/or substantively and tends to constrain each of its organizational, human and curricular components to its own stability or maintenance requirements it represents *formal education*.

To the extent that it is not closely integrated structurally and/or substantively and tends to adapt as a system to accommodate to the requirements of mission or new components, whether organizational, human or curricular, it represents *non-formal education*.

We conclude that:

> *Non-formal education is any intentional and systematic educational enterprise (usually outside of traditional schooling) in which content, media, time units, admission criteria, staff, facilities and other system components are selected and/or adapted for particular students, populations or situations in order to maximize attainment of the learning mission and minimize maintenance constraints of the system.*

Non-formal education is discriminated from incidental and informal education in that it is intentional and systematic. More significantly, non-formal education is distinguished from formal education not by the absence, but by the non-centrality, of form--by the persistent subordination of form to mission.

Non-formal education has many variations, each with its unique characteristics. Several of those characteristics, while not universal and therefore definitive, appear so frequently that they clearly deserve to be noted: (1) It is not likely to be identified as "education," (2) It is usually concerned with immediate and practical missions, (3) It usually occurs outside of schools. Any situation which affords appropriate experiences may be employed as the learning site, (4) Proof of knowledge is more likely to be by performance than by certificate,

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(5) It usually does not involve highly organized content, staff or structure; (6) It usually involves voluntary participation, (7) It usually is a part-time activity of participants, (8) Instruction is seldom graded and sequential, (9) It is usually less costly than formal education, (10) It usually does not involve customary admission criteria. Potential students are those who require the available learning or who are required by the situation to have it, (11) Selection of mentors is likely to be based more upon demonstrated ability than on credentials; and voluntary leaders are frequently involved, (12) It is not restricted to any particular organizational, curricular or personnel classification; and it has great promise for renewing and expanding any of them, and (13) It has potential for multiplier effects, economy and efficiency because of its openness to utilize appropriate personnel, media and other elements which may be available in a given situation without concern for externally imposed, often irrelevant and usually expensive criteria and restraints.

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NON-FORMAL EDUCATION:
PROBLEMS AND PROMISES

By

Ted Ward and John M. Dettoni

Worldwide, education is changing. Purposes, techniques, and institutional forms are changing. Educational reform is in the center of public attention in many countries. Formal institutions are being challenged to reduce costs while providing more diversified services to a greater number of people. As a result, innovation is a major theme. Innovation is occurring not only in formal education, but to an increasing extent it is also stimulating the expansion of non-formal education. There has been an increased awareness that non-formal modes of education hold great promise, especially to the developing countries as well as to the developed ones. Along with promises, there seem always to be some problems. To get a balanced picture of the new interest in non-formal education one must look at both the promises.

DEFINING NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

A comprehensive and standard definition of non-formal education is not yet available in common usage. Perhaps such a definition will not emerge until after much more study of the educational issues and potentialities inherent in the variety of experiences now

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called non-formal education. The implied and real distinctions between formal and non-formal education should be seen within a systematic and holistic view of education. It seems useful at present to provide a tentative definition of our usage of the term "non-formal education," in order to better identify our current view among the many variations. Whether or not the term "non-formal education is viable in the long run, it is useful now to highlight alternatives to formal, institutionalized educational enterprises. To use such a term is an honest yet unfilled attempt to distinguish among the major educative forces in a society.

"Non-formal education" is a negative descriptor, and thus it says less than the term "formal education." (It is like defining a car by saying it is a non-horse, non-airplane, non-boat, etc.) Often "non-formal" has been understood by the layman as being without form or discernable structure, organization or purpose. "Formal" on the other hand connotes procedure, purpose, form and order. Yet much education--in addition to the formal schools--in the community, the home, church, industry and other similar social institutions and business organizations has form. Thus "schooling" is perhaps even better than "formal education" to denote the particular sort of education provided by the educational establishments. Non-formal education, on the other hand, usually indicates education that is "non-school." Indeed the issue is non-*school* rather than *without form*. The distinction then

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is not the matter of "form" versus "form-less"; rather it is non-formal agencies as distinct from the formal agencies and institutions. Formal agencies are given over to education as their primary purpose; non-formal education is more apt to be seen as a means to an end. Usually non-formal education focuses on improvement of social and personal living, occupational capability and vocational competency. In these emphases, education is not the goal; it is rather the means to the goal. Education is of concern because of what it can and will do for the learner rather than for any intrinsic value. It is of value only as it can help the student to make changes in himself and his environment in accord with his goal(s). In some societies formal education has come to be seen as having intrinsic value; whereas non-formal education is almost always seen to have functional or practical value in terms of the utility of the learning it produces.

Formal and non-formal can also refer to the administrative structure and style of the educational effort--or even the arbitrary labelling of the management or sponsor. A family planning program differs from a primary school on the basis of administration. The family planning program is non-formal education and the primary school is formal. Yet both are in a basic sense formal and institutionalized. The military services teach basic mathematics; and so do primary schools. Because of the lack of the label "school"

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on the former, it is non-formal education while the primary school is formal.

By using the above understanding of non-formal education, we can see that the military services, youth corps operations, agricultural extension and the like are all concerned with non-formal education. Indeed, they are concerned with educating, but they do not lack form or structure. To call them "non-formal" stretches the language quite far. It might be more precise to call them "non-school," yet here we are again in semantic difficulty because they may call their educative operations "schools."

Virtually all uses of the distinction between formal and non-formal education seem defective. They all seem too arbitrary to be supportable as part of a coherent theory. The formal/non-formal distinction is at best a sub-division of some larger construct. The problem up until now is that non-formal education has been relatively undefined, because the non-school sector of education has been of little interest and concern to educational planners. Thus, though we now need a term to designate this large and sprawled sector of educative resources and operations, the best distinction we can make is arbitrary and disjunct from systematic theory.

Taking the largest possible view, we see that educational operations function within a society; and since a society, through its educational enterprises, creates formal and non-formal educational institutions, we can examine the whole function of

education for a given society. By focusing on the gross categories of educational functions, we may be able to see what is formal and what is non-formal within education. Figure 1 attempts to do this. This figure is a generalization drawn from the anthropological view of institutions and their sources of authority.

		METHODS OF INSTRUCTION		
		Covert Procedures		*Overt Procedures*
SOURCE OF AUTHORITY	*NORMS (informal codes)*	*1*		*2*
	POLICY (formal codes)	*3a*	*"non-formal"**	*4a*
		3b	*"formal"**	*4b*

**An arbitrary distinction drawn from the administrative structure, style and label-designation of the educative agency.*

Figure 1.--Educative Functions in a Society as Reflecting Methods of Instruction and Sources of Authority.

Source of Authority is dichotomized into two codes that govern the social mandates (authorizations) of education. Norms are the informal socio-cultural codes. Policy, on the other hand, is the formal structured, superintended instituting of education by some formal authority in the society. (This could be anyone from the local teacher to the national minister

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of education.) In contrast, the family, neighborhood and peers educate the child or the new comer toward informal goals and by informal means through extra-legal authority (namely, social norms).

Methods of Instruction is dichotomized into overt and covert, indicating the extent to which deliberateness is reflected in discrete, identifiable and obvious procedures in executing the educative functions. Overt procedures are the easily identifiable and structured modes used by society's institutions to teach. Covert procedures are the more subtle, enculturating process--the "caught" teachings presented to each learner throughout his life-time by all the functions of his society. For example, the family rarely uses overt means to teach the skills of speaking the mother tongue; the school rarely uses anything but overt means to teach a second language, but it may use only covert modes to reinforce and enrich the fluency of mother-tongue speech.

No function of society falls exclusively into any one of the cells of this chart. In various realms and on various occasions school, family, religious orders, government and community exercise the authority of norms or the authority of policy and instruct in covert and overt ways. The usefulness of the chart is more in its raising of productive questions, e.g., *when* does the family employ overt modes? On what educative matters does the church establish policy? In what matters is the school operating in covert modes?

The formal/non-formal distinction now gains perspective: as typically used "non-formal education" is an arbitrary sub-division of the authority-by-policy sectors (cells 3 and 4). The distinction is made (as suggested above) in terms of the administrative structure, style, and labeling of the agency. Note that "non-formal education" does not ordinarily apply to the authority-by-norms sector (1 and 2). This is the arena of socialization and enculturation which is more correctly called "informal."

Elementary and secondary schools, as well as colleges and universities, are primarily engaged in *cell 4* operations, and since they are formally designated as "schools," they can be considered *cell 4b* operations. But note: the school also operates in covert ways to carry out both policy and norm-authorized learning (cells 3 and 1). Schools infrequently engage in *cell 2* operations, for the important reason that schools, as formal institutions have their authority in policy; when a school overtly educates, the authority is that of policy. For example, a local school may impose an informal community standard of conduct or dress. In doing so, the school makes it a matter of policy, e.g., "dress codes" and "conduct policies."

In Figure 2 education within a society is viewed from a slightly different perspective in order to provide an additional clarification. A "where/how" view of instruction is the focus of the concept. One continuum is "where" instruction occurs, i.e., the

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THE WHERE?HOW VIEW OF INSTRUCTION

How? (The Mode) Continuum	Where? (The Setting) Continuum: MORE FLEXIBLE	LESS FLEXIBLE
INFORMAL (casual via norms)	SOCIALIZATION	SCHOOLING AS SOCIALIZATION
PLANNED (programmatic via policy)	EXTENSION	SCHOOLING AS FORMALIZATION

Figure 2.--Educative Function in a Society as Reflecting the Settings and Modes of Instruction.

setting. It asks whether the setting is more flexible or less flexible.

SETTING

A less flexible setting is one in which the environment places a great deal of constraints upon the learner. It is a setting where people assemble to learn under the constraint of that environment. Usually the less flexible learning environment is fairly rigid and exacting. A more flexible setting is the learning environment more characteristic of out-of-school learning. It is characterized by fluidity and lack of narrow constraints on behavior and subject matter. For example, the school classroom is a less flexible environment and the school playground a more flexible one.

MODES

The second continuum is "how" the instruction occurs. It asks the question whether the instruction is informal or planned. The informal mode is casual, based upon social norms. This mode can be found in either the more flexible or the less flexible setting. In contrast, the planned mode is a systematic attempt to instruct, based upon some sort of educational policy. It has a programmatic sequence and approach to what is taught. It, too, can be found in either setting.

The distinction here between informal and planned modes allows us then to draw a four-fold table and makes the formal/non-formal distinction easier to see than does Figure 1. These distinctions also suggest that from a social anthropological viewpoint, we have mapped the differences between education that occurs within a formal institution and education that occurs in the remainder of a society's institutions. The process of socialization or enculturation includes the casual handing down of knowledge, skills, and attitudes in flexible environments in order to bring people into a culture. When these casual things are done in fixed or determined ways, it is generally thought of as schooling. Schooling thus can be seen to be part of socialization. The school has an effect because it exists. (It has an effect even beyond its structured curriculum. A number of people writing in the field of curriculum since the decade of the 1930's, have been pointing out that there is

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often a great distinction between what the school thinks it is doing and what it is really doing! This distinction concerns outputs of the school that may or may not be antithetical to its stated goals.) Schooling, in the sense it operates casually (imposing norms) is socialization; in the sense that it operates in a structured way it can be said to be formalization.

NON-FORMAL EDUCATION AS EXTENSION

For some of us the most intriguing cell in Figure 2 is the more flexible approach to planned instruction which is labeled "extension." ("Extension" in this diagram, is virtually equivalent to the term "non-formal.") In deliberately planned non-formal education, the motive is to take education to the people. This sort of extension is happening in the sidewalk colleges. It is happening overseas in church-related operations such as the extension theological education movement. These are exciting efforts to bring educational opportunities closer to the people and to open more alternatives to formal schooling experiences. In doing so, the movement is toward a more flexible environment, and in some cases, to a more casual mode.

From Figures 1 and 2 we can arrive at a tentative understanding of the major elements that go into a definition of non-formal education. These are as follows: (1) authority for content is based on policy; (2) both covert and overt procedures and methods are used; (3) instruction is planned, systematic and follows some sort of organized program;

and (4) it occurs in a more flexible setting. If we put these all together we arrive at this point: Non-formal education is a planned instructional design which uses both overt and covert procedures in a more flexible environment to teach towards a goal determined by a regulated policy.

Non-formal education focuses on practical, functional, and often, work- and job-related education. This distinction is reflected in Figures 1 and 2. A primary value reflected in most non-formal education is on the immediate usefulness of education--in terms of personal growth and occupational enhancement. A second predominant value element is person-centeredness. Since those who are engaged in non-formal education are usually keenly aware of the practical and immediately useful goals for their educational experiences, they tend to center their instructional approach on the particular or categorical needs of their students. In other words, non-formal education is need-centered. Particular content is determined by identified student needs. A third element is that often there is no certification of the instructional staff. As often as not, the teachers are those who themselves have mastered the cognitive-affective-psycho-motor skills involved but do not have formal accreditation, in the sense that this concept is used in the area of formal education.

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RELATIONSHIP OF FORMAL AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

As defined here and elsewhere non-formal education seems to be set in juxtaposition to formal education. This is unfortunate since it may connote antithesis. Rather there are several positive relationships which point to synthesis.

First, it is becoming obvious that few if any of the developing countries are wealthy enough to support two major national and competitive educational schemes, especially if they are in conflict. To do so would debilitate both personnel and financial resources and would tend to divide the country rather than unite it. It is much more intelligent to consider a single, workable educational program rather than seek to build new or enhance alternative educational programs. Interestingly, there are a number of non-formal alternatives already showing themselves in many countries. The question then is what to do with them: allow them to continue to develop as competitive, alternative systems; repress them; adapt the formal educational institutions to the non-formal model; or integrate the whole into a broader concept and plan for educational development?

Second, while in theory the goals of formal and non-formal education seem to be different, in reality both are attempting to do the same thing from different perspectives. Both are trying to bring a people and economy to increased personal and national productivity. Both formal and non-formal educators are aware that

education, of the right sorts, is an important instrument for national development.

Third, both approaches to education often use similar if not the same methods and materials. Or, if this is not the case, it would not take much modification to use many instructional materials interchangeably.

It is probably appropriate to note at this point that non-formal education is seen to be responsive to the cry of the masses for relevant education. Formal education has been beset with this demand for a long period of time with relatively little response. Now that alternatives to formal education are being planned and provided, formal education itself is belatedly attempting to become more practical. Thus the formal institutions are becoming somewhat less rigid and are patterning their approach to the non-formal model--suggesting points of ultimate parallel in materials and procedures.

Fourth, though both non-formal and formal education are working to increase the national level of education for national and human resources development, they are both frustrated. Both non-formal and formal education realize the enormity of the task in terms of personnel, finances and matériel. Formal education is beginning to recognize that it has not met the expectations of either its constituents or its own leaders: the problems have overcome the promises. Non-formal education, however, has several things in its favor that formal education does not. The fact*

*Text continues at the end of this booklet.

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CAUTION!

It is necessary to add a cautionary note. Non-formal education is regarded by many as "anti-establishment" education. It is often promoted as the antithesis of formal or institutionalized education. There is much room for doubt about this generalization. Especially since established educational agencies and institutions are getting into non-formal education the scene is changing. Whenever the "establishment" begins to use any devices or procedures (whether or not they are "non-establishment") in order to achieve "establishment" ends, they become "establishment" functions. The distinction between formal and non-formal education is thus not the same as between establishment and non-establishment efforts.

Perhaps one of the key elements in the controversy is that *schooling* has failed--not necessarily that education has failed. There is a high probability that under certain influences and in certain hands, non-formal education also will fail. The issue is not necessarily school versus education, or schooling versus non-schooling, or anything of the wort. It is likely simpler than that: it may be that *effective education* is the issue. In our own domestic situation, and also on the world scene, we are just now coming out of an era of "oversell" in education. During the emergence of nations of the Third World, we have seen a kind of blind grasping for the economic and welfare gains that are thought to accrue from education. The

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result has been that the modes and forms of education that have been grasped have been largely built upon models of education essentially foreign to these nations. Most of these models were created on common Western European and American concepts of educational design and institutional management which often were irrelevant to other countries. As we emerge from the era of oversell, frustration has set in and there is a feverish search for alternatives--simple and culturally relevant ways to provide effective education.

Peter Drucker has made a useful distinction between *effectiveness* and *efficiency*. The characteristic American aspiration is for *efficiency*, which Drucker defines as ". . . the art of doing things right!" *Effectiveness*, on the other hand, is "the art of doing the right things." Great is the distinction! We need both efficiency *and* effectiveness in education. We must assure that educational functions relate to societal welfare, broadly and specifically defined. As outside consultants and helpers, we must find ways to help without exploitation. The emphasis on non-formal education is not an automatic preservation against further exploitive operations. In fact, given the hands and given the motives, it can be as exploitive as any other form of outside management of institutions. Those who want to help must be constrained by a commitment not to repeat the impositions of technocratic achievements that have accompanied some "helping" activities in the past. As we begin to employ non-formal methods

and modes, there is a need for a much more clear theory of educational functions within a society. Such theory must be drawn from sociological, anthropological, and psychological sources. Our tendency in the United States has been to draw very heavily from psychological theory and to be less careful about drawing from anthropological and social theories as they relate to education. Today's current fad of over-individualization of instruction (in which learners are sometimes "individualized" to the point of isolation) results from this tendency. A socio-anthropological view is concerned about the interaction of learners for their educational good. Adequate theory for the planning of educational functions within a society must be drawn from the whole range of the social sciences.

What is education within a society and how does it function? Here is the primary question that must be answered before beginning to innovate. The emphasis on non-formal education is less a matter of new information or ideas than it is a matter of new focus or emphasis. Non-formal education is now coming into primary attention on its own right. But if it is to be used responsibly as a total educational plan for national development, it must be seen in relation to the whole of educational efforts that exist within a society.

One of the problems in education as it relates to national development is the tendency to state goals too generally. Usually when people come to a point of frustration in defining their goals, they

adopt, instead, goals that seem to be slef-explanatory. In other words, they will adopt a generalized statement that is supposed to define itself, and they substitute it for the very difficult work of really defining the appropriate educational goals. In many cases this tendency has been seen in the relating of formal education to national development. It is not that formal education is irrelevant but that it is not given a chance because its goals are not clearly brought into alignment with the fulfillment of stated national needs. In our eagerness to help in national development we may tend to bring goals that we have developed in our own framework (in another part of the world) and use them as *substitutes* for locally defined goals. The real issue is what sort of education will most effectively relate to the next steps that can be justifiably taken. Involvement of American public and private agencies in national development overseas must be disciplined by objectives defined within the national situation. It is necessary to clarify the needs to which education is to be related.

Non-formal education is not a compromise. It is a response to a "now" situation. We have before us an occasion to revise and to innovate instructional modes. There is an exciting possibility that the non-formal education movement will open the eyes of the world to see alternatives to traditional lecture-style approaches to instruction. Also, we have an occasion to involve ourselves as technician-helpers rather than as goal setters.

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PROMISES OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

Inherent in our treatment of the elements of non-formal education are suggestions of what non-formal education promises to its practitioners and leaders. The first is that non-formal education promises to be a more effective approach to solving certain problems of education for national development and individual growth. Closely related to this is a second promise that its education is functional and practical, i.e., related to the life-needs of the people. It is probably true that practicability enhances effectiveness and effectiveness seeks to be practical. Non-formal education promises to start with the felt needs of the people in order to help them achieve their goals and by so doing help the nation to develop. It does not take much imagination to perceive the relation of practicality and effectiveness.

Third, non-formal education seeks to maintain a cost-effective consciousness of what it does in order to provide the most effective and purposeful consequence with the most efficiency. There is an awareness of the potential contributions of instructional technology and communication media and principles that will reduce the amount of personnel while increasing the amount of coverage. Involved in efficiency and effectiveness is the inherent commitment to seek for innovative means to achieve the goals. Innovativeness, the mentality that looks for new, renewed or rejuvenated approaches to old problems is the fourth promise of non-formal education. People

in non-formal education are apparently less inhibited than those in formal education--not afraid to ask for a different approach, to try a new twist or an unproven idea.

Fifth, non-formal education offers a more eclectic, multi-disciplinary approach to the problem of development in a country. The tendency to look towards one discipline for the solving of all problems is seen as insufficient. Instead, numerous disciplines are sought out in order to arrive at workable solutions. Formal education has, unfortunately, tended to isolate itself from its own basic disciplines--particularly in the social sciences. The resultant promise of this type of approach to education is that decisions and programs will be developed from a holistic viewpoint toward the students, sub-culture and culture.

Sixth, non-formal education promises to produce short-term effects as well as long-term ones. A developing country cannot wait decades to achieve progress. People throughout the country want to have improvements as soon as possible. Non-formal education promises such accomplishments. True, such short term gain may have more political than economic value, but the tenuous condition in many developing nations demands movement toward development of the entire country rather than merely an elitist few.

Seventh, non-formal education assists in the decision-making of educational and developmental funding agencies on both a national and international level. This is possible through the effects which

can be observed after a short duration. The agencies do not have to wait for one generation to grow up into leadership before results can be assessed. On the contrary, effects can be sometimes seen in literally just a few weeks or at most a year or two which allows for funding agencies to make assessment and reassessment of the program over a relatively short period. Related to this is the eighth promise, namely, that non-formal education provides a more rapid and immediate measure of the effectiveness of instructional design. The objective of the non-formal educational processes are usually defined in the short-range, thus making intended behavioral changes--though small--apparent more rapidly. This, in turn, allows for more immediate feedback regarding the relative effectiveness of the instructional design. Thus constant analysis is possible, leading to continuous modification of the procedures to meet the needs, goals and expectations of the participants.

PROBLEMS OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

Non-formal education is confronted by several problems. The first is the tendency in many developed as well as developing countries to have a blind faith in instructional technology, design and media--especially the mass media. That these areas hold tremendous promise as part of the solution to development by education is unquestioned. The tendency though is to seek national programs in these areas before more basic questions of needs, goals and availability of instructional resources (personnel

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and matériel) are answered. It seems that advisors to non-formal education development must avoid catching this "disease" from their clients.

Second, there is a closely related problem of avoiding the serious and difficult ground-work of cultural and sub-cultural analysis, goal setting and resource inventory before designing a delivery system. The great temptation is to adopt someone else's system "lock, stock and barrel," or to develop a new system without knowing enough about the basic and determining factors in the environment of the learners. Again, the advisors' responsibilities are to ask the hard questions that must be answered before proceeding into the actual development of an instructional system.

Third, it is evident from our observations in some developing countries (and from our own country!) that bureaucratic conflicts are a practical problem with which one must deal. Jealousies and political fighting within and between bureaus and ministers is a common factor. It would be naive for advisors to think that they will not be involved in the politics of bureaucracy. Advisors will have to figure out how to work as much as possible within the existing bureaucracy without adding to it and without becoming frustrated.

Lastly, non-formal education can be oversold to developing countries. The result could be the promise of meeting needs that simply cannot be met because of limited resources, in terms of personnel, finances and matériel, and too little time to develop an

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instructional design that fits a particular group, subculture or nation. In other words, non-formal education might be seen as a panacea--but without the time necessary to develop workable procedures and without the required resources. Advisors to the developing countries as well as the developing countries will have to bear in mind that although non-formal education does produce shortrange change, it does not produce a full-fledged national program within a very short period of time. It must be remembered that even though a pilot project can demonstrate its significant effectiveness, this is not a fully developed program for the masses. Mass education does take time to be developed. It would be wise, therefore, to remind ourselves and others that we must have realistic expectations regarding the mass changes that non-formal education can produce within a short time period.

If the promises of non-formal education are to be fulfilled, careful insightful planning is needed. The functional roles of education within the culture of a society must be understood. The problems of making education more effective through the innovative non-formal alternatives are worthy of a thorough search for solutions.

AN OPERATIONAL APPROACH TO THE DEFINITION OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION*

1. THE CONTEXT OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

Although non-formal education can be treated as a general concept, and although we have approached it, for the most part as a general concept, we recognize that the concern with non-formal education within AID has a specific context. Setting the context has important ramifications for definition, planning and theory. We will only sketch in the context here, with special emphasis on those points that seem to us to be most significant for planning efforts.

1.1 THE CONTEXT OF CHANGING DEVELOPMENT GOALS

It is apparent that important shifts are taking place in the way in which development is being conceptualized, both in assistance agencies and in the LDCs. Those shifts can be understood as the result of an expansion of the development concept, rather than as the replacement of an "old" concept with a "new" one. A number of goals that have, historically, been pursued indirectly as hypothesized consequences of economic growth have been brought forward to a

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central place and identified for pursuit in their own right--nutritional and health goals; employment goals; distributional goals--in short, those dimensions of development that are most directly related to the immediate human condition of the masses of people in the LDCs. There seems to be rather solid evidence in the development literature that this shift in thinking about development is one of the strong factors in the impetus for non-formal education.

1.2 THE CONTEXT OF LIMITED RESOURCES

Closely related to (1.1) is the recognition that all approaches to planning and development must take a hard-nosed look at limitations on resources. Efficiency of time and cost are critical factors in planning and evaluation of development efforts generally. Furthermore, development efforts increasingly are geared toward planning that proceeds from a notion of "growth" that is more expansive than a limited emphasis on immediate increases in GNP. In this context, it becomes important to give a heavy emphasis to non-formal education as a means to accomplishing educational goals within development plans that proceed from such objectives as rural development and the development of labor intensive industry. Equally important is an emphasis on non-formal efforts that look promising from the viewpoint of cost/effectiveness/distribution.

1.3 THE CONTEXT OF THE CLIENT

Although we have not established a clear construction of the most fruitful applications of non-formal education, it has become fairly clear that one of its most important applications involves people who, through complexes of circumstances, are not primary clients of traditional, formal education--the poor, the isolated, the rural, the illiterate, the dropout, the unemployed and the underemployed. In most LDCs, these "excluded" people constitute a majority of the population. Typically, formal school systems enforce their own distinctive criteria in regard to aspirations, literacy and the like, simply ignoring those who, for whatever reason, do not or cannot meet those criteria. Non-formal education may provide a means of reaching those large masses of people who do not "mesh" with formal schooling.

Most of the people in the world--particularly in rural areas--are illiterate. Accordingly, most if not all of the programs generally thought of as "modernizing" or developmentally oriented must be carried on in the context of illiteracy. In some population segments of some LDCs--women, rural populations, etc.--illiteracy rates may range from 50-98%.

Inasmuch as the purposes or aims of modernizing efforts are related both to increasing the personal competence and growth of people as well as to improving production and levels of living, it is not necessary to separate out which aim is more important of realization. They are inextricably interrelated.

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Development programs in agriculture, health, community development, etc., *can be carried on in the context of illiteracy*. As a matter of fact, the urgency of increasing food production, eradication of dread communicable diseases and the achievement of other minimal programs of development, cannot and should not be held up until functional levels of literacy are attained. This is not to be construed as an argument for ignoring the need for sustained and effective programs of literacy training, but merely to note that the widespread presence of illiteracy is *not* fatal to development efforts. It is to say that ingenious non-formal educational and "communication" techniques and approaches must be utilized until higher levels of literacy are attained. The tasks of development are made the harder and slower because of widespread illiteracy but they need not be stopped. Basic to the above is the fact that village people are generally *intelligent* --though illiterate.

Most of the world's people are not only illiterate but are dependent for their survival on agricultural production--broadly construed. Agricultural production in developing countries (generally characterized as traditional agriculture) can generally be described as having the following characteristics: is principally concerned with production for immediate consumption by the farmers and their families--the yields are typically small and the variety of edible crops very limited; utilizes a minimum of agricultural

technologies--seeds, fertilizers, storage, marketing, agricultural machinery, credit, etc.; is uninfluenced by the relatively small number of sophisticated agriculturalists who have knowledge of modern methods to recommend. Although this list could be extended, the clear implication is that the first and most critical application of efforts to utilize non-formal education methods and experiments is in the field of agriculture and rural development.

Fortunately there is growing evidence that farmers, although highly conservative (for good reasons related to risks related to survival) will adopt progressive practices when the recommended practices are within their means to adopt and when effective non-formal educational efforts are closely related to *specific*, demonstrably better practices.

A major reason for the failure of the formal system to link up with some of its potential clients lies in disparities between the learning styles and expectations of the clients and the learning styles and expectations of the formal schools. Formal schools display little ability to alter or adjust their expectations and style, and yet the demands for economy of time and resources make it imperative to present clients with education that conforms to learning styles and expectations they already possess. The typical schooling process, which alters learning style as a concommitant of, or prerequisite to, the pursuit of concrete education objectives, is very costly in terms of time and resources. In light of

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this, a task for non-formal education may be the development of educational approaches that, in planning, begin with the cognitive style and patterns of expectations already possessed by the clients. What educational procedures, for example, can be effective in involving illiterates in development efforts? We cannot say for sure, but we suspect that the possibilities are more extensive and hopeful than we have generally supposed.

1.4 THE CONTEXT OF GOVERNMENT AND ACCOUNTING AGENCIES

It is often true that non-formal education projects conducted outside of the Ministry of Education are not regarded as being primarily "educational" in nature, or even that educational processes are primarily relied upon for their success. Conversely, within the Ministry of Education it is often true that educational programs are not thought of as contributing directly and immediately to the process of development (only in a general "residual" way). They are more often thought of in terms of "human resource development."

AID, through its own planning, organization, and general outlook, seems to accept the concept that many development projects rely on education processes and principles and should therefore consider themselves to be "educating" activities and not just development activities. Conversely, education programs should be influenced so that they attempt to contribute directly to development projects that can make use of

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an education input. In short, *all* ministries need to recognize that, in most countries, educational activities take place in many locations other than the Ministry of Education.

One stratagem that could be utilized to influence agencies that are truly educative in nature to think of themselves as such is to include their activities under the heading of education when the national accounts are tabulated, if that is not already done. We consider health extension, for example, to be a non-formal education activity. Yet when the national accounts are tabulated and the expenditures for education are presented, they usually include nothing to reflect the educative benefit of health extension, radio, agricultural extension, NFE in the modern sector, or other non-formal education activities.

This not only might begin to influence these agencies to think of themselves as educating bodies, but will also present a truer picture of the share of the national wealth that is being expended on education.

It has long been supposed that expenditures on formal education in many countries totals only about half the total expenditures on education. The Ethiopian situation suggests that the *direct* expenditures on more or less formal education by ministries other than the Ministry of Education are sizable. (Referred to here are programs that are quite structured and "formalized" and not programs of the "extension" type.) If these expenditures are not

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included in the national accounts as expenditures on education, a misleading figure is being presented. It would seem that an examination of the way the "country accounts" are tabulated, vis-a-vis education, is called for. Inclusion in the expenditures on education of costs of structured training programs in other ministries (in Ethiopia seven ministries other than the Ministry of Education conduct vocational education programs of some sort), expenditures for privately provided education, costs of education outside the country itself and various other non-formal education programs would indicate that expenditures on education are far greater than one might have expected.

The policy making machinery and administration of governmental programs in developing countries are typically inadequate to meet the demands and opportunities of government for providing services--including education--to their citizens. These inadequacies are particularly acute in the area of local (rural) government. More specifically: There is inadequate planning of governmental services--including the definition of the role of formal and non-formal educational services. There is typically a large amount of turn-over in key policy and administrative positions. Governmental employees at the local level are typically less well qualified and trained for the performance of their tasks. Work in rural areas is clearly less attractive than in urban centers. Budgeting, fiscal controls and related aspects of administration are typically cumbersome

and accordingly result in various failures and low morale. Many technical "experts" in agriculture, health and other fields typically think of themselves as "administrators" of these programs rather than as "teachers." In the process of formulating non-formal educational programs the role of these indispensable persons needs to be recast in terms of their educational function. New and more creative retraining and in-service training programs are needed to recast their functions and approach. The net effect of the above is that proposals for fostering programs of formal or non-formal education need to build into the administrative plans as many antidotes to these deficiencies as it is possible to deve[illegible]

1.5 THE CONTEXT OF FORMAL SCHOOLING

In planning for education, any society already possesses several highly visible places in which education is systematically pursued--the family, religious institutions, marketing institutions, trade-learning and apprenticeship arrangements and, the subject of these remarks, the existing formal school system. All of these locations merit attention in educational planning, and the formal school system is singled out for detailed treatment only because it is, perhaps, most visibile of all and because in our deliberations, we have carried the analysis of the interface between formal schooling and non-formal education somewhat further than we have the relationship between systematic non-formal

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efforts and such "informal" contexts as the family. It might be fruitful to regard these remarks about formal schooling as being generalizeable to other educational contexts, especially "informal" ones.

There seem to be at least four ways in which planning for non-formal education needs to take account of the formal system of schooling. First, the formal system may provide some channels and resources for non-formal efforts. Second, in some instances it may be possible to integrate the two systems, in order to guard against costly duplication. Third, a continuing concern is the possibility that the existing, often powerful, formal system may absorb, under-cut or alter non-formal efforts. Fourth, in some instances, a "natural" continuum may be established for the movement of efforts from a non-formal origin to incorporation in a formalized structure. There appear to be some fairly major incompatabilities between the two systems and the formal/non-formal interface is a problem that requires careful management. Ideally, the aim is the allocation to both the formal and non-formal systems of those tasks that each can perform best.

For the most part formal educational programs in rural areas (as well as urban) in developing countries are of limited *immediate* value in helping rural people in attaining higher levels of agricultural production and correspondingly related higher standards of living. The characteristics of formal educational programs which make this a true statement are as follows: The

number of school age children who are actually in school for a long enough period to become literate is relatively small. Most formal schools have little or nothing to offer adults who are immediately involved in production processes. The curriculum is dysfunctional as far as rural development is concerned--frequently based on foreign models which are associated with a colonial heritage or adopted as a result of the advice of local or foreign leaders. Educational programs are inordinately expensive in their immediate or extrapolated dimensions when compared with the financial support base available. The increasing demands for public expenditures in other sectors of development (economic infrastructure and other social services such as health) have caused an increasing number of developing countries to take a harder look at expenditures for education. The curriculum, educational materials and teaching methods are designed to be utilized on the assumption that students will move through the various levels of education, preferably and ultimately to the university level, rather than on the basis of several defensible "terminal" levels. Thus many of the formal educational programs in developing countries often provide an "escape" from the harsh realities of their environments rather than contributing to the solution of complex developmental problems. The high premium paid to ultimate employment in a white collar, urban job in the minds of students and their parents is a deterrent to more realistic and functional planning of

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educational programs. Functionally designed non-formal educational activities closely related to the achievement of development goals may come to be regarded as acceptable substitutes for dysfunctional formal education in the minds of parents and educational leaders.

1.6 THE CONTEXT OF THE REWARD STRUCTURE

One thing that has become strikingly apparent in our consideration of contextual issues is the crucial role of the relationship between any educational effort and the structure of reward promise the effort possesses.* The reward structure has several significances. The reward structure is a major determinant of the holding power of education, both in terms of the participation of the client and in terms of his commitment to it. Too, the possession of credentialling and certification power is a cornerstone of the capacity of the formal system to resist change and reform. Careful attention must be given, in planning, to building real rewards into the non-formal effort and to assuring that projected rewards are actualized. When an objective of non-formal education is the provision of an alternative to formal schooling, an effort should be made to either "de-couple" the formal system from the credentialling process or to provide the non-formal system with a roughly equivalent credentialling mandate.

* *"Reward" is intended to be broadly construed. In some cases it may be as basic as simple survival.*

1.7 THE CONTEXT OF COMMUNICATION

In general the communication media and devices normally available in "developed" environments (radio, TV, newspapers, libraries, etc.) for the communication of ideas are not available or if available at all are geared to *urban* problems or interests. Accordingly, in planning programs of non-formal education in rural areas considerable thought needs to be given to the limitations of the environment and to ingenious ways of using or adopting what is available. The use of radio (transistor sets), for example, has demonstrated its efficacy, but a considerable amount of creative ingenuity is needed in order to fit the use of the media into a sound "non-formal" educational program.

In addition, several if not most of the developing countries have severe problems of devising programs which take account of numerous local languages or dialects in a context of a "declared" national language to say nothing of the problem of communicating with officials in what frequently is their second language.

2. DEFINING "NON-FORMAL EDUCATION"

Considerable attention has been given to the question of what non-formal education *is*. This has not proven to be an easy question to answer. It *may* not be an important question. Any definition of non-formal education has its basis in the purpose of the definer. As purposes differ, so do the aspects of education upon which we focus in order to construct a definition. It is apparent that several different

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aspects have attracted our definitional attention. Furthermore, the several dimensions that creep into definition are independent of one another, so that we frequently find ourselves in the fabled quandary of the seven blind men examining an elephant. At least four possible parameters of definition have occurred with some frequency in our deliberations:

2.1 DELIVERY SYSTEMS

In general, this is a distinction between "in-school" and "out-of-school" learning activities. In addition, there are distinctions between different sorts of out-of-school delivery systems. Some, such as the family, are indigenous, while others, such as the agricultural extension service, are exogenous. Some are political, some social, some religious and some educational in terms of their institutional character. Some systems are local, while others are regional, national or international.

2.2 PURPOSE

It is possible to categorize educational efforts in terms of their purpose. The most generalized distinction is between efforts that have short-term, quite specific purposes (non-formal) and those that have long-term, very general purposes (formal).

2.3 PEDAGOGICAL CHARACTER

The terms, "formal" and "non-formal" are also used to designate different styles or modes of pedagogy, with those modes having a high degree of structure being termed "formal," while "non-formal"

is assigned to modes that have little pre-planned structure. The flexibility/rigidity of pedagogy is also used as a definer--flexible → non-formal and rigid → formal.

2.4 CREDENTIALLING AND NEEDS

Finally, the formal/non-formal distinction is employed to distinguish programs that lead to official credentials (formal) from those that are built on linkages to the specific needs of the clients. Put another way, this aspect of the distinction centers on the motivational set of the client and the relationship between his motivation and the educational program. The differentia is between those programs in which the relation is direct (non-formal) and those in which it is indirect.

Suppose, now, that we look at a program and find it to be short-term and highly specific ("non-formal"); sponsored by and located in a school ("formal"); highly structured and rigid ("formal"); and formulated in response to client needs and not leading to a credential ("non-formal"). How should such a program be characterized? We are not yet able to answer that question, at least in regard to the most fruitful way to conceptualize the field of inquiry.

It is probable that there is not just one, but at least three, definitional tasks that need to be addressed. (1) There is a need for an analytic or "scholarly" definition, that sets out the domain of the concept and has the power to locate and clarify conceptual and theoretical inquiries. (2) There is a

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need to formulate and collate a fairly wide array of operational definitions--those that emerge from the assignment of the term, "non-formal education," to events in practice. (3) Analytic and operational definitions need to be linked by an intermediary definition capable of pairing elements in those two definitions, so that the two can be used conjointly. That sort of linking or matching definition may be called "pragmatic." What is offered here is an interim pragmatic definition of "non-formal education," intended to apply only to existing and proposed *educational* programs* and chosen especially for purposes of this report. That definition has the following four elements:

1. Although they may be linked to formal schools in several ways, such as sponsorship and shared facilities, non-formal efforts are outside the formalized, hierarchical structure of the graded school system.

2. Non-formal education is a deliberately planned educational effort, having identifiable sponsorship, goals and programs. It is not "incidental" or "informal."

3. The "non-formality" of an educational effort is taken to reside in its location, sponsorship and

This qualification is important, since we do not wish to apply the restrictions contained in the definition to the general search for resources, strategies and ideas. We do not want to overlook agencies that, at present, have no overt educational dimensions.

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administration, but not in either its purposes, its pedagogical character or its credentialling status.*

4. Given these definitional constraints, our particular interest lies in a subset of effort that satisfy the above criteria. Those educational efforts that have identifiable *developmental* purposes related to the contextual setting in which they take place can be defined as the referent of the concept "non-formal education for development."

It might be a good idea to formulate different language to name distinctions of purpose, pedagogy and credentialling, such as "general education" and "specific education" (purpose); "highly structured" and "minimally structured" (pedagogy); and "primary motivation" and "secondary motivation" for, respectively, need-based and credentialling programs. It might even be helpful to abandon the whole formal/non-formal dichotomy altogether. That decision depends mainly on the success or failure of a yet-to-be-made effort adequately to theoretize the entire array of independent definitional parameters.

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*Text omitted on p. 20.

The fact that non-formal education exists in more flexible settings, is person-centered, focuses on practical things, and yet is systematic all tend to make non-formal education more effective and efficient for development. So then, while both formal and non-formal are facing similar frustrations, they do so for different reasons: formal education because of its lack of efficient effectiveness, and non-formal because of its inability to do more of what it is quite good at doing.

In conclusion, it is quite conceivable that non-formal education has the key to successful education in both formal and non-formal modes. Formal education needs to continue to study the reasons for success of its non-formal sibling and seek to adopt and adapt these to its own programs. On the other hand, non-formal education needs to learn from its older sibling some of the lessons of educational life, instructional design, and learning theory, to name just a few areas, so that it will be able to increase its efficient effectiveness in instruction.

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